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TAGS: [POSCE](#) [PREK](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [NL](#)
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/OSCE: MADRID MINISTERIAL, MD/CFE
PROPOSALS

REF: A. STATE 157672

[1](#)B. STATE 159773

Classified By: Political Counselor Andrew Schofer, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (C//NOFORN) Summary: The GONL does not "expect much" from the upcoming OSCE Madrid ministerial, given too many issues pitting Russia against Europe and the United States, such as Kosovo, the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, and missile defense. MFA OSCE Special Advisor Tony van der Togt said the GONL was highly skeptical that the proposed Steinmeier-Moratinos CFE brainstorming session prior to the ministerial would achieve its desired outcome. Likewise, van der Togt was skeptical of any CFE-related breakthroughs at the ministerial, and noted that the anticipated Russian moratorium on CFE actions would "not be the end of the world" -- that type of outlook only re-inforces Russia's position at the ministerial. He said it was perhaps more important to engage with Russia following Madrid, and continue to push for a resolution on the Istanbul Commitments and the Adapted CFE Treaty. With the exception of a possible deal on the rotating chairmanship, van der Togt was not confident the ministerial would achieve much in terms of substance or deliverables. Van der Togt discussed these issues with polmiloff on November 26. End summary.

Central Asia and Afghanistan

[1](#)2. (C) Van der Togt agreed with Ref A points pertaining to Central Asia, especially regarding the importance of strengthening customs and border security in the effort to increase stability in Afghanistan. He agreed that Russian efforts to undermine the role of ODIHR negatively affect OSCE efforts in Central Asia. While van der Togt supported our efforts to broaden the OSCE-Afghanistan/Central Asia relationship, he emphasized that any focused projects or training take place in Central Asia and not in Afghanistan.

Balkans

[1](#)3. (C) Van der Togt agreed that continuing the OSCE mission in Kosovo was a top priority, but expressed concern over Russian and Serbian statements threatening to close the mission in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence by Kosovo. Van der Togt agreed that other missions could be reduced in scope, but stressed that the GONL believes the mission in Croatia should at least remain open -- albeit substantially downsized -- to support local refugee and war criminal tribunals.

CFE

¶4. (C//NOFORN) Van der Togt said the GONL was highly skeptical that the proposed Steinmeier-Moratinos CFE brainstorming session would achieve its desired outcome -- "it is too late for any last second solutions," especially among 30 different representatives, van der Togt said. He added, however, that "keeping dialogue open" was important, and that the Dutch would participate in the CFE pre-meeting provided NATO Allies meet first to pre-coordinate. Likewise, van der Togt was skeptical of any CFE-related breakthroughs at the ministerial, and noted that the anticipated Russian moratorium on CFE actions would "not be the end of the world" -- that type of outlook only re-inforces Russia's position at the ministerial. He said it was perhaps more important to engage with Russia following Madrid, and continue to push for a resolution on the Istanbul Commitments and the Adapted CFE Treaty. Given CFE difficulties, van der Togt noted that a ministerial statement simply "for the sake of having one" did not make much sense -- a statement should be based on substance, and van der Togt doubted any meaningful statement was possible given expected Russian opposition.

Russian Proposals -----

¶5. (C//NOFORN) Van der Togt said the GONL was very concerned about Russia's proposed OSCE reforms, including especially ODIHR's election monitoring practices. He noted the EU counterproposal essentially challenges Russia's attempt to place ODIHR under the Permanent Council, and described Spain's attempts to reach a compromise between the two as "failing," especially as the latest Spanish rework gives Moscow "far too much authority over ODIHR." Van der Togt said the GONL was alarmed by the other Russian proposal to regulate the participation of NGOs in OSCE meetings, but

curious why Moscow had agreed to delay consideration of the proposal until after the ministerial. Van der Togt wondered if Spain had agreed to be lenient on the ODIHR proposal provided Moscow agreed to delay consideration on the NGO proposal -- "how else to explain Spain's latest and very poor attempt at bridging the gap between the EU and Russia on ODIHR," he speculated.

¶6. (C//NOFORN) Van der Togt described the timing of the OSCE decision not to send observers for the upcoming Russian parliamentary elections as "ill-advised." No matter what the truth may be, van der Togt said ODIHR Director Strohal's announcement canceling the mission shortly after his return from Washington can only help Putin and fuel Russian conspiracy theories. Van der Togt admitted that "hindsight is 20-20," but if the mission were to be canceled, it should have been done much earlier or later following the Washington visit. At this point, van der Togt said, ODIHR needs to avoid further distraction on the Russian parliamentary elections and focus on the presidential elections next year.

¶7. (C) Finally, van der Togt said the Dutch do not believe the OSCE requires a charter to address functioning or the principles of the organization. But they are willing to discuss the charter in exchange for Russian agreement on the convention regarding privileges and immunities. Van der Togt stressed that the Dutch in no way support the current Russian draft charter; "it clearly need substantial revision." Without at least a "pro-forma" discussion on the charter, however, van der Togt doubted Russia would agree to the convention on privileges and immunities.

OSCE Chairmanship -----

¶8. (C) Van der Togt noted that with the many issues -- Kosovo, CFE, missile defense -- currently dividing Russia, Europe, and the United States, the upcoming OSCE chairmanship rotation appears to be the only one that might be resolved at Madrid. He expected Kazakhstan to take Spain's "face-saving"

deal and accept the chairmanship in 2010 or 2011. Van der Togt was curious if the USG, along with the UK, would join consensus -- "should one emerge" -- on granting the chairmanship to Kazakhstan for a date later than its stated goal of chairing the OSCE in 2009.

CFE, MD Updates

19. (SBU) Polmiloff passed Ref B points to van der Togt regarding latest USG proposals to Russia on Missile Defense (MD) and the CFE Treaty. Van der Togt appreciated the points, noting the GONL will review them and return with any questions. He also heard from the Dutch embassy in Washington that A/S Fried and U/S Rood would brief NATO Allies November 27 on MD; van der Togt said the briefing will be attended by Dutch embassy officials.
Arnall